



COMMUNITY ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE



Session 8: Creating a Communications Plan

To make sure that you are engaging with the people who will be most interested or get the most out of your project or campaign it's important to think about how you will communicate your message(s). A communications plan doesn't have to be a long or polished document but it can help you to clearly define your aims, audience, messaging and communication channels. Don't forget to think about your comms timeline and any key dates you will work your comms around.

Use the template below to help you start thinking about the communications plan for your project (or a hypothetical project).

<p>Aims</p> <p><i>(What are you trying to achieve through your communications and how will you measure success?)</i></p>	
<p>Audience</p> <p><i>(Who are you trying to engage through your communications?)</i></p>	
<p>Messaging</p> <p><i>(Think about what messaging would resonate with your audience. How will you engage this specific audience with your campaign/project?)</i></p>	
<p>Channels</p> <p><i>(Think about how you would reach your audience. Where would they find your campaign/project - social media or local events or community centres? What type of communications would they respond to - posters, social media graphics, articles in newsletters?)</i></p>	



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Example Comms Plan: The Cambridge Climate Change Charter (CCCC)

The below is an example of what a comms plan might look like. It is a shortened and adapted version of the Cambridge Climate Change Charter communications plan.

Aims

(What are you trying to achieve through your communications and how will you measure success?)

- **Primary aim:**
Increase reach and sign ups of The Charter to Cambridge organisations, businesses and individuals, especially within hard to reach audiences who don't usually engage in sustainability initiatives. Use regular communications over a wide variety of channels, projects and organisations to establish The Charter as the recognisable brand for climate action in Cambridge.
- **Secondary aim:**
Engage with the local call to action, supporting, empowering and celebrating positive action. Establish an infrastructure of support and guidance, by tailoring messages to audiences, incentives, frequency, tone of voice, and trusted communicators, and providing platforms and events for deeper engagement.

Audience

(Who are you trying to engage through your communications?)

- **Hard to read audiences.** Specifically:
 - Religious groups
 - Young adults
 - Families
 - Climate aware but unsure how to act
- **Businesses.** Specifically:
 - SMEs
 - Well-known
 - Non-green

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Messaging

(Think about what messaging would resonate with your audience. How will you engage this specific audience with your campaign/project?)

By signing The Charter the Cambridge community is coming together and demonstrating their commitment to take action on climate change to stimulate action on a larger scale, setting for Government action particularly in the lead up to and in the aftermath of COP26.

General messaging

- The climate emergency is a real threat and is happening now, but we can all be part of building a sustainable future for all.
- As a community we can all take positive action and be part of the solution by reducing our carbon footprints.
- This Charter demonstrates the Cambridge community's commitment to taking action on climate change and is a platform that enables us to support one another in making a meaningful difference.
- The Charter is here to support you.

Individual

- Charter is flexible and pledges can be tailored to fit personal circumstances while supporting the community effort.
- There are many win-win situations when reducing your carbon footprint.
- Join residents all over Cambridge who are already taking action, from diverse backgrounds.
- Support your friends and family through positive climate action.

Businesses

- Demonstrate your commitment to sustainability to the Cambridge community and other businesses through the CCCC.
- Businesses have a unique opportunity to act as climate leaders in the community through empowering and supporting customers, staff, stakeholders and other businesses.
- Be on the wave of change and stay ahead of the latest net zero developments with the support of The Charter.
- Join a community of like-minded businesses.
- Signing The Charter establishes you as a resilient business, helping build your business, revenue, and customer base, all while shrinking your footprint.

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Channels

(Think about how you would reach your audience. Where would they find your campaign/project - social media or local events or community centres? What type of communications would they respond to - posters, social media graphics, articles in newsletters?)

To reach a wide range of audiences, The Charter messaging needs regular communications through a wide variety of channels, projects and organisations.

Website

- The website is currently the main platform to access The Charter and its support functions. The Charter needs to be made easily identifiable on the CCF homepage, for instance having a whole wave section dedicated to The Charter to make it stand out, using the full name “Cambridge Climate Change Charter” to provide context of what The Charter is.
- The website can help create a space for open dialogue where businesses and individuals can get advice, give feedback, and support each other.

Social media

- The CCF channels to utilise are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Currently the majority of CCCC specific content comes from CCF channels. Expand conversations and create an online community through encouraging current signatories to share signing The Charter, tips and photos using the hashtag #camclimatecharter.
- As seen by the increase in engagement and sign ups over the increased communication in the lead up to the Mass Sign Up Day on June 5th 2021, it is important that there is regular online communications around The Charter. This is to keep audiences aware of The Charter and its development, along with connecting to the audience's motivations on why they should become a signatory.

Stalls

- Explore opportunities to hold stalls promoting carbon footprint reduction and The Charter at relevant fetes, fairs and festivals, providing a relaxed platform for people to calculate their carbon footprint and ask questions. Use a short version of talking through the online calculator to provide a backdrop for discussions, and focus on people's motivations behind taking climate action and how signing The Charter aligns with these. Stalls will have a flexible set up, with the communication approach altering depending on the individual.